Nixon May Get Surgery

Tests Reveal Clot Blocking Left Leg Vein

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By Robert Meyers
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LONG BEACH, Calif., Oct. 24—Surgery to correct a sudden attack of blood clots caused by phlebitis in former President Nixon's left leg is "a real possibility," according to his doctor.

Dr. John Lungren, Mr. Nixon's personal physician, ordered his 61-year-old patient to enter and stay in Memorial Hospital of Long Beach late Wednesday night immediately after tests revealed the "almost total" blockage of a vein in the left leg and several blood clots in the left thigh.

Standard therapy for such clotting involves anti-coagulant drugs, which Mr. Nixon has been taking at his San Clemente home. However, the new clotting indicates that the therapy has not been working, Lungren said.

"If anti-coagulant therapy cannot be established and controlled, then surgical intervention is a real possibilty," he said. It is the first time that Lungren has raised the possibility of surgery on his patient.

The doctor termed hospitalization "imperative" because of "a poor response over the past few days" to the drugs Mr. Nixon has been taking. Tests Wednesday night at the hospital also showed that "the deep-femoral vein in the left leg is almost totally occluded [obstructed]." They also revealed "the presence of new or old clots in the deep-venous system of the left thigh," Lungren said.

Medical corpsmen have regularly brought blood samples from San Clemente to the hospital for analysis. Wednesday afternoon tests revealed that the therapy was not working. Mr. Nixon was immediately driven to the hospital and ordered to stay after the tests. He had not been expected back at the hospital for several weeks.

The current treatment to thin Mr. Nixon's blood was described by Lungren as "intensive heparin and coumadin therapy." In late September, when Mr Nixon was first hospitalized here, the coumadin was administered orally and the heparin was administered intravenously. It could not be learned if the same methods are being used now.

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NIXON, From A1

When he entered the hospital at 6:30 p.m. PDT Wednesday for tests, Mr. Nixon was given a bilateral venogram; that is, an iodine solution was injected into his left foot. The solution then appeared on an X-ray picture in the vein between the ankle and the groin. From those X-rays, doctors realized for the first time the presence of the renewed clotting. As with his previous experience with phlebitis, or inflammation of the veins, the danger of clotting is that a clot could travel up a vein to the lung and prove fatal.

Lungren said intensive tests are being administered "to see if Mr. Nixon is in the small group of paradoxical cases: i.e., people for whom anticoagulation cannot be maintained by drugs."

If Mr. Nixon is in that group, then surgery is a "real possibility," Lungren said. However, a hospital spokesman would not speculate on what kind of surgery might be required or when or where it might take place.

The former President was routinely examined last month during his hospitalization by two staff surgeons, Drs. Siebert Pearson and Eldon Hickman. They made the decision not to operate after examining him Sept. 27.

Mr. Nixon also is being at-seventh floor suite at the hospital, where Lungren had been chief of staff. On his earlier visit the former President had stayed in a sixth floor suite.

Mrm Nixon also is being attended by a nurse from the hospital staff. On his previous visit he had been seen only by the two Navy corpsmen who traveled with him.

The Associated Press reported that Mr. Nixon was "very depressed and grumpy when told of the potential danger involved with the renewed clotting and that he would have to stay at the hospital. The AP also quoted a source as saying that Mr. Nixon was on a low-cholesterol diet, concerned about his health, and that he had been working hard on his books and papers at San Clemente.

A source who saw Mr. Nixon enter the hospital Wednesday night described him as "gray, haggard, and with a stubble on his face."

Cypriots Protest U.S. Aid to Turkey

NICOSIA, Oct. 23 (AP)—Several hundred Greek Cypriot students marched through the streets of Nicosia today in an ani-American demonstration.

They chanted slogans and carried placards deriding U.S. Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger. They also demanded withdrawal of the Turkish invasion force from Cyprus and the return of Greek Cypriot refugees to their homes. Many Greek Cypriots feel the American government was behind the Turkish invasion of last July.

The demonstration wound up outside the heavily guarded U.S. Embassy. The students sat in the street for 10 minutes blocking traffic.